

10 Ways to Change Your *MINDSET.*

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Introduction

The beginning of a new year is a great time to start something new, or to set new goals that you want to accomplish. Once you formulate how you will get there and all of the things you need to get started, there is **one** more thing to do that you might not have thought of:

Prepare your mindset for growth and success.

This may seem simple but it's really not - most people underestimate the power that your mindset truly has. But don't just take my word for it - a recent study on mindset conducted by Stanford University determined that approximately **92% of people say that the goals they set for themselves each year never get achieved.**

It was interesting to note that in that group of just 8% that said they DID accomplish their goals, the participants came from all walks of life and all socio-economic backgrounds. There was representation from people who were single, married, and divorced...highly educated to high school dropouts...and ages and ethnicities varied broadly as well.

Despite all of those differences, there has to be some key commonality that all of these people have, right? There is. They all had similar success oriented mindsets that guide their thoughts and actions. So when you consider these factors, it stands to say basically this: ***No matter where you are in life or where you came from, you've got the ability to set goals, effectively change your mindset, AND achieve them.*** Pretty cool, huh?

But how DO you change your mindset? We are glad you asked. Here is a list of ten things that can help to guide you in that process!



1. Accept that your thinking needs adjusting

We've all had goals and dreams that didn't unfold the way we hoped or expected. When this happens repeatedly, we start to wonder what we need to change.

But rarely do we look inside at our own thinking as the place to start making changes.

We live in a skillset-driven society that emphasizes learning new skills and improving the ones we're weakest at. This often fosters the belief that we need more education in order to achieve our goals. Some people go back to school, others take seminars and workshops or read books, always looking for that silver bullet or magic wand that they can wave and then everything will fall into place.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not downplaying the value of skillsets; those are definitely important too, and truly...there's no such thing as being "too good" at a variety of things. But more often than not...it's actually *our mindset* that needs adjustment.

The good news is, it's a lot less expensive and much faster to change your mindset than to go learn a new skill. So step one is simply to acknowledge that you're going to work on your mindset - and changing it - first.



2. Identify your counter-mindset.

Mindset is formed through prior experiences and emotional milestones. When you have a mindset that isn't producing the results you want - that is a counter-mindset.

Some examples of counter-mindset would be self-doubt, limiting beliefs, and any other negative thoughts that get in the way of you fulfilling the things you want to fulfill.

Around 65,000 thoughts go through our minds each day. Unfortunately, in the case of most people, a large part of them are negative. These **Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANTs)** occur so often that you're probably not even aware of them. Most of us aren't.

For example: You know that little voice that points out irresponsible spending choices when you're looking at your monthly budget? Or makes disparaging comments when you look in the mirror? We all know that voice. It makes you hesitate before doing things that are outside of our comfort zone, even if they are very small things. It's the voice that stops you from approaching someone you'd like to meet. It makes you think twice before starting a business or considering a career change.

All of us have different ANTs, and without knowing it, we're habitually allowing them to destroy our dreams. It's hard to remain positive when that little voice is constantly spouting off and saying things like, "I can't talk to her/him," "I'm not smart enough," "I'm out of shape," "I'm not qualified" blah blah blah, noise noise noise.

The way to start exterminating the ANTs in your head is to begin paying attention to them. Notice when you hear that disparaging voice and recognize how frequently it happens. More than likely, you'll find that your limiting thoughts can be narrowed down to a few key themes. Taking note of this is a major step because we can't change things that we don't acknowledge. So this is truly a case of "knowing is half the battle..."



3. Flip the switch.

Once you've identified your top negative thoughts, you need a way to stop them from holding you back. A good technique for this is something called "*flip the switch*," which moves thoughts from negative to positive.

For years, every time I looked in the mirror, all I saw were flaws and things I didn't like. But after doing a LOT of work on my self esteem (and realizing that action wasn't productive...) I started doing the opposite - I flipped the switch. I'd look in the mirror and force myself to say, "You look good!" It took some time to get used to it, and I'll admit, it felt kind of weird, too. But...the reality is that positive thoughts and negative thoughts can't occupy the same space, so by flipping the script, I put my ANTs on notice that we weren't going to be talking like that to ourselves anymore. And I'm happy to say...it actually worked wonders for my confidence.

Another technique I find effective is called the “if/then” approach. Once you identify when your ANTs typically show up, apply a thought process that allows you to essentially think yourself past them. When you do this enough, you pretty much reprogram your brain to stop pushing forth those ANTs.

Here’s an example: Say you plan to go for a walk after dinner to get more exercise, but when dinner is over, your ANT shows up. If you start to hear the voice in your head that says you’re too tired, too full, or you’ll never lose the weight anyway, then walk to the closet immediately and put on your running shoes.

Often, just taking one positive step in the right direction is enough to shut those ANTs up. If you find it helpful to write them down, do it! Prepare yourself by creating a list of if/then statements ahead of time.



4. Understand your “Why?”

I always say that “**Why?**” is the world’s most important question...because there is not much more important than knowing the *reasons* that you do the things you do. In fact, when you come to truly understand WHY you do the things you do, it gives you immense power over those things... and it gives you the power to CHANGE them, too.

Speaking of change...changing your mindset takes work because formed habits aren’t easy to break. This is especially true since many of our most harmful habits and counter-mindsets were established when we were younger, and we’ve been doing things the same way ever since.

Understanding your “why” is about starting fresh and deciding on one goal or dream that, when you achieve it, will mean a transformational change. Losing weight. Quitting a bad habit or vice. Making upward career moves. Practicing more positive self talk. Improving your relationship with your partner or your family. Whatever it is, once you have met the goal, it will serve to make you happier and more fulfilled...so it’s meaningful...and anything that is meaningful and helps you be a better you is absolutely worth doing, right?

Once you identify what your “why” is, write down on paper why it really matters to you. Fold it up and put it in your wallet, or tape it somewhere that you look at often throughout the day. It might seem silly, but seeing your goal written down in that manner is often excellent for building your motivation.



5. Realize that motivation and willpower are not enough.

Most people incorrectly believe that motivation and willpower are all that’s needed to achieve their goals. And no wonder they do, since it’s common advice you hear from friends and family, or books and other media. But sadly...it really ISN’T enough, because motivation can be hard to maintain, no matter how important your goal may be.

In theory, this is when willpower is supposed to kick in...but the thing with willpower is that...it is similar to a gas tank. You set out each day with a full tank, but you deplete your “fuel” every time you use it. So when you are met with multiple temptations throughout the day...and you use

willpower to resist them, your willpower - and often your motivation, too - is spent. That's why you reach for the cigarette after work because you had a stressful day, even though you have been trying very hard to quit...that's why you just grab some fast food instead of cooking and think "I'll just start the diet again tomorrow..." The point here is that it doesn't take long to simply give up and abandon our goals when we rely only on motivation and willpower to achieve them because of those things are fallible. That's why 25% of people give up on a goal after the first week, and 60% quit after the first month.

People who are high achievers usually understand this reality better than most...which is why this step is simply about recognition. Achieving your goals isn't about white knuckling your way to success using only motivation and will power. This is setting yourself up to fail. When you accept that making changes is not a linear process and it requires MANY things to be effective (with mindset at the forefront), you'll stop mentally punishing yourself for stumbling or failing to stick to your plan. That will then leave you emotionally freer to **optimistically** try again tomorrow!



6. Start small so you can finish BIG.

This may sound counter-intuitive, but one of the best ways to change your mindset and meet your goals is through setting ridiculously tiny, utterly achievable ones. How tiny are we talking about here? One push up. One less piece of candy. One less cigarette. One less drink. One chapter in a book. Whatever it is you are trying to stop or start doing...start small so you can build up the discipline and tenacity to go for - and MEET - a larger goal.

If your big goal is to get daily exercise, then your small, attainable goal is to do a single push-up each day. If you want to reduce stress in your life, your tiny goal might be to meditate for one minute every night. If you want more quality time with a loved one, your mini goal could be watching a TV show together or going for a walk together for 30 minutes.

I could go on, but I think you get the point - each of these examples requires almost no motivation or willpower to accomplish. And yet, each is a positive step. Here is the trick. Decide that your tiny goal is the minimum and that you can do more if you feel up to it. A lot of the time, you'll do more and will feel **great** because you're overachieving. Some days you may do the minimum, and you'll still feel great because you've met your goal.

Do these tiny goals actually make an impact? Yes, they DO! It's because massive change requires small steps, repeated daily, which create momentum and yield positive cumulative results. The top 8% of achievers understand this, but most people never try this strategy because they think it seems pointless to start so small. Wrong! Over time, consistently hitting your small goals will form new mindset habits, and that's real progress toward revamping your thinking so you can reach your BIG ticket goals.



7. Get comfortable with the "F" word.

No, not THAT F word! Another one that is not nearly as fun to say, and it's definitely not fun to have happen to you. **FAILURE.**

The steps for how to change your mindset that we have discussed so far can help you move forward with confidence towards your goals. However, it's critical to understand that it will be hard work. **And sometimes, you will fail at meeting benchmarks, both large and small.**

When most people hit a wall, they make an excuse or give up. But people who are high achievers know that the only thing that will keep them from their goals is to stop trying ... so they don't! They know that they'll encounter obstacles and even fail along the way. What separates them from the other 92% is that they prepare for failure mentally. They know it's coming, and it doesn't scare them or make them give up. When failure happens, they seek feedback and make adjustments to get back in the game.

You can do this by giving yourself permission to fail. It will take the pressure off getting a perfect end result, and you can be ready to learn from missteps and make adjustments that will keep you moving forward.



8. Cultivate your emotional intelligence.

The word "intelligence" is, in my humble opinion, often misunderstood. It means so much more than just having an extensive vocabulary, or having a high IQ, or knowing all the answers when you play Trivial Pursuit. In fact, famed psychologist Howard Gardner proposed that there are actually **NINE** different kinds of intelligence - Interpersonal, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Linguistic, Intra-Personal, Natural, Spatial, Musical, Logical-Mathematical, and Existential.

Each person possesses a little of all 9, but some people have more of one area than others. For example, people have quite a bit of "book smarts" but not nearly as much common sense. (*Hi, it's me. (Waves) I'm that someone!*) Or you will meet someone who has high logical-mathematical intelligence, like my college friend Samantha. She was a chemistry major and would sit around solving highly complex math problems "just for fun" (*She had a strange idea of what "fun" is, I guess...*). However, she had to take a remedial English class more than once because she struggled to read the required books for a regular college level class, and struggled even harder to write a simple essay. It was certainly not because she wasn't "smart." She just had a higher level of that logical-mathematical intelligence than she did the linguistic kind.

Now that I gave you a basic rundown on that...of the types of intelligence that exist, probably one of the MOST important types is **emotional intelligence**, which is a combination of Interpersonal and Intra-Personal intelligence. Emotional intelligence is often instrumental in decision making, and it helps you manage your relationships both with others and yourself.

Emotional intelligence has 4 basic pillars: self awareness, self regulation, empathy, and social skills. When you are trying to change your mindset and your habits, you rely on one of those pillars - self regulation - to help you stay on track. So, when those things are NOT your strong suits - meaning that you often struggle to regulate your emotions and you let them control your actions a little TOO much - it can be a LOT harder to get the GOOD habits you are trying to form to stick. Poorly regulated emotions are going to want to back slide into what's comfortable, even if it's not good for you.

Here's where working on the first pillar - self-awareness - can help you tremendously. Recognize your emotions and understand their impact on your thoughts and behaviors can help you control them both, and change them little by little. And yes, this is something that is best done as a slower pace - you have a higher chance of success that way.

So the takeaway here is this: Emotional intelligence can be improved and strengthened, and it benefits you greatly to do so, not just for changing your mindset or meeting your goals. It can help improve your life in numerous other ways, too.

There will be a future video on emotional intelligence on the Priority Messages YouTube channel in the near future. Stay tuned!

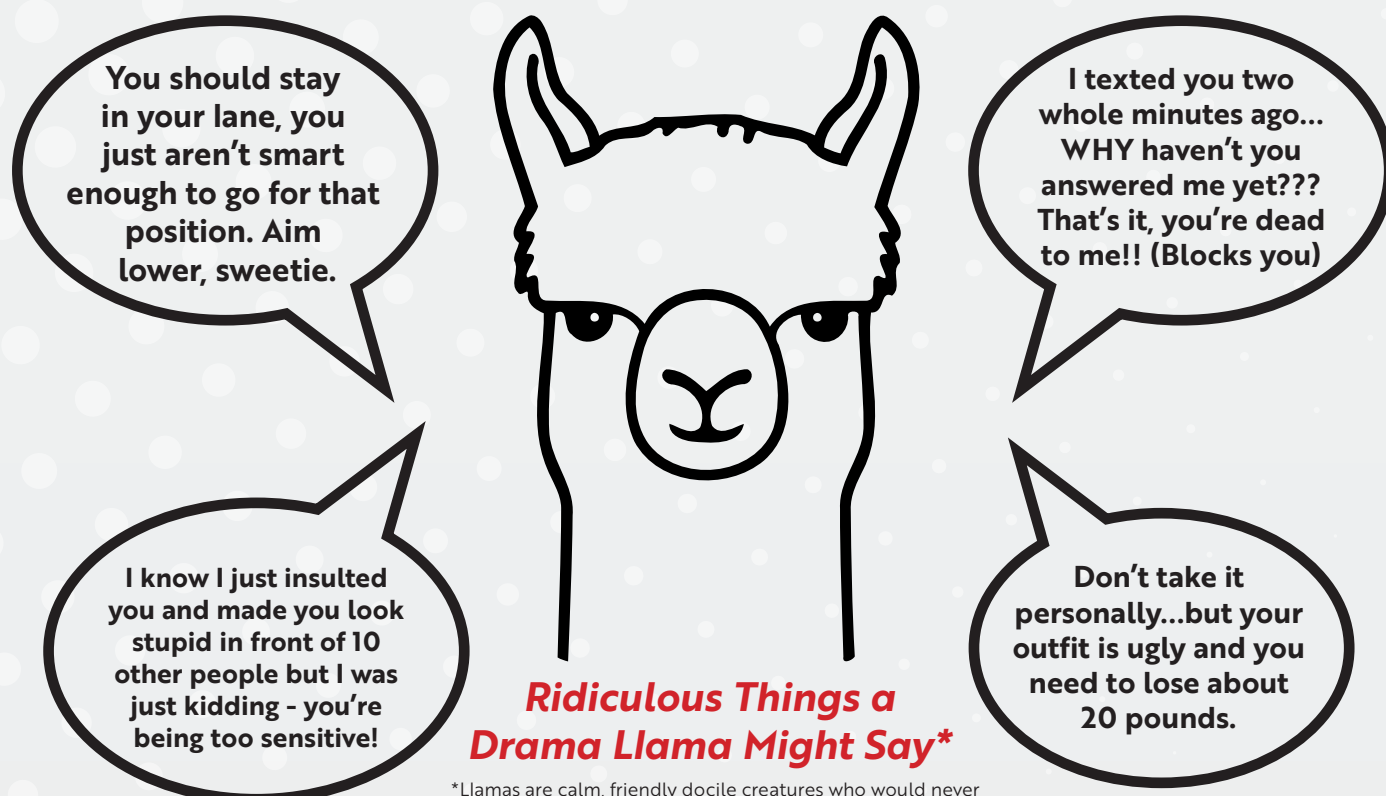


9. Surround yourself with positive influences.

Believe it or not, friends...the things - and people - around you make a difference when it comes to cultivating a better mindset. When you surround yourself with negativity, it is bound to rub off on you...and it can take a toll on your mental health. This is especially true when you are the target of that negativity. You can only listen to "You're not smart enough to do that!" or "You shouldn't try that, you can't do it!" so many times before you start to believe it.

By the way...don't ever let other people tell you what you are capable of doing. Only YOU truly know that.

Seek out people who inspire you and make you feel good about yourself, instead of "drama llamas" who only want to drag you into their misery so they have company. Cultivate your relationships with the people who truly love and support you - AND your growth. If you don't have people like that in your circle, join clubs or groups that align with your interests. Attend something social where you can meet new people. If neither of those is your jam, find some positive things to follow online that offer inspirational content or things you can learn from. The point here is that it is not always easy to distance yourself from negativity but it's important and necessary to do so when you are trying to make POSITIVE changes to your mindset.



*Llamas are calm, friendly docile creatures who would never insult you or anyone, so this is just for example purposes. No actual llamas were harmed in the making of this illustration.



10. Celebrate progress, not just the outcome.

Did you spend an extra 30 minutes working out today? Celebrate that! Did you get something you were creating done earlier than expected? Celebrate that! Did you complete a portion of a bigger project that was really difficult and you're proud of that progress? Celebrate that!

I think you get what I'm trying to say here. **Celebrate your wins...even the small ones.** Learn to clap for yourself even if nobody else is clapping along with you. This is so VERY important because it boosts your self esteem, and your confidence...your brain LOVES a win. And it will definitely help your motivation to KEEP GOING.



BONUS TIP: Stay curious.

Throughout history, nothing has been responsible for more breakthroughs, discoveries and incredible innovation than human curiosity. "Stay curious" has been a personal mantra of mine for a long time because I feel like there is always something new you can learn. Sometimes learning more about something makes you evolve your views on it or see things in a different light. Sometimes it leads you to a greater understanding. And sometimes it shows you things about yourself that leads you to want to make positive change.

How do you "stay curious"? There's a few ways, actually! First and foremost: **ASK QUESTIONS.** Don't be afraid to admit when you don't know something. **Seek new experiences** that will help broaden your perspective and enhance your understanding of the world. **Stay open minded** and be receptive to new viewpoints and ideas.

Making learning a lifelong habit is an excellent springboard for changing your mindset. Learning itself is an exercise in growth, so it's almost like you start out the race with a leg up already. Learn to learn from EVERYONE. Each person you meet can usually teach you something - even if it's small. And finally, learn to embrace the unknown. Instead of seeing it as a negative, see it as opportunity - to learn and to explore.

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